

Appl. No.: 10/707,929
Amdt. Dated: 1/25/2006
Reply to Office action of: 11/16/2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

There are no amendments to the drawings presented herewith.

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 – 4 remain in this application. Amended claim 3 and new claim 4 are original claim 3 redrafted to overcome the improper multiple dependent claim form objected to by the Examiner.

No new matter has been introduced by these amendments to the title, specification, abstract, and claims.

Claims 1 – 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Lages et al. (US 6,191,672 B1). Specifically, the Examiner states:

Lages et al. discloses a plugboard for housing sockets and micro-relays, of the type having a plurality of connectors, allowing connection of a plurality of sockets or micro-relays (Col. 2, lines 10 – 13), composed of a base 1 having a plurality of holes 15 – 17 for housing connectors 35, each of the plurality of connectors having a pair of connector pins 39 characterized in the holes 17, 15 are rotated 180° with regard to the position of the adjacent holes 16 intended for housing the connectors, in the plugboard (Col. 4, lines 14 – 17) and (Fig. 2) thereby allowing for all connector pins 39 to pen and secure the plurality of connectors within the corresponding plurality of holes (Col. 3, lines 56 – 60).

With respect to claim 2; Lages et al. further discloses that the base 1 is provided with three holes 15 – 17 for housing three connectors 35 suitable for mounting sockets or micro-relays (Col. 3, lines 20 – 21). Wherein the central hole is aligned 180° with regard to the two remaining holes intended for housing the connectors (Col. 3, lines 21 – 22).

With respect to claims 3 and 4; a plugboard for housing sockets and micro-relays characterized in that in each one of the holes 25 – 27 of the plugboard (Fig. 2), all the pins 39 of the connectors, sockets, or micro-relays can open ensuring the connection between plugboard and connectors, sockets or micro-relays introduced in the holes (Col. 3, lines 54 – 59).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. The key to Applicants' invention is the ability to connect multiple connectors, sockets, or micro-relays in a plugboard in a

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reduced space while retaining the ability to lock said connectors, sockets, or micro-relays into said plugboard using connector pins which are capable of fully opening or locking due to the novel positioning of adjacent the connection holes in said plugboard. The Examiner's argument that Applicant's arguments do not apply because of the "open-ended" language is misplaced and incorrect. Claims always are read in light of the disclosure and teaching of the specification to which they are appended and they can never have broader boundaries than the teaching of the specification. The Lages et al. reference, as discussed below, requires critical elements that Applicant's claimed invention eliminates. This is a classic case law definition of being patentable over the prior art. Furthermore, the Examiner could not reach Applicant's invention from the cited reference of Lages et al. without having first read Applicant's claimed invention as there is no disclosure, teaching, suggestion, or legally required impetus for one skilled in the art to remove critical elements of the Lages et al. reference to arrive at Applicant's claimed invention. Furthermore, the Lages et al. invention will not secure the connectors to the plugboard if you remove the critical elements of locking slides and corresponding locking chambers so removing them to argue the reference teaches Applicant's claimed invention results in a non-functional device. Thus, under the Examiner's reasoning Applicant's claimed invention is not possible to Lages et al. who is one skilled in the art, making Applicant's claimed invention clearly patentably novel.

A fair reading of Lages et al. reference discloses a plugboard to connect connectors, sockets, or micro-relays requiring two critical elements, namely, a base 1 having a pair of locking chambers 9 (see Col. 3, lines 33 – 35) and a pair of secondary locking slides 8 (see Col. 3, lines 32 – 36) inserted into the underside of the base member 1 into corresponding locking chambers 9 (see Col. 3, lines 33 – 35). Further plug jacks 33 and 35 allocated to the flat plugs 13 through 17 are then inserted into corresponding contact chambers 23 through 27 through the secondary locking slides 8 (see Col. 3, lines 36 – 39). Thus, a critical element of the Lages et al. reference are a pair of secondary locking slides 8 to mount the connectors, sockets, or micro-relays onto the plugboard 1 via corresponding locking chambers 9. Applicant's claimed invention does away with these required critical elements of the Lages et al. reference.

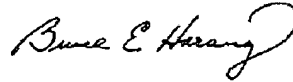
Clearly, when viewed in this light the Lages et al. reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the use of the positioning of the holes for receiving the connectors,

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sockets, or micro-relays without the need for a pair of locking slides as does Applicants' present invention. Furthermore, Applicants' invention does not disclose, teach, or suggest the need for additional elements to provide the desired mounting of sockets, or micro-relays.

In view of the remarks herein, and the amendments hereto, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and such action and issuance of a timely Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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